

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 NIC-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11

COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DRC-01

SCEM-02 SCI-06 SSO-00 /212 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2093

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13199

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

1. I HAD A PRIVATE DINNER WITH PRIMIN RUMOR AT HIS HOME LAST EVENING. OUR MEETING WAS EXTREMELY CORDIAL IN NATURE AND MARKED BY VERY FRANK DISCUSSIONS ON A BROAD RANGE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDING A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS UPON US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS (SUBJECT OF SEPTEL ROME 13194).

2. I STARTED THE CONVERSATION BY CONGRATULATING RUMOR ON BEING NAMED HONORARY PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN UNION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES (UECD) AND EXPRESSED MY CONCERN FOR THE NEED OF MORE ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE VOICE BY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AS COUNTERBALANCE TO EFFECTIVE AND WELL ORGANIZED COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS. RUMOR AGREED FULLY AND POINTED TO THE FACT UECD HAD AGREED TO OPEN A ROME OFFICE OF THE ORGANIZATION WITH A SMALL SECRETARIAT AS WELL AS AN OFFICE IN BRUSSELS. TEMPORARILY THEY PLAN TO USE THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT FOR THIS PURPOSE. RUMOR EXPRESSED THE HOPE
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THAT UECD WILL MAKE MORE ACTIVE USE OF THEIR CHAPTERS

IN AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AND SOUTH AMERICAN AND THAT IN HIS NEW ROLE AS HONORARY PRESIDENT TO CONTINUE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE. HE AGREED WITH MY SUGGESTION THAT IN HIS NEW POSITION, HE MIGHT HAVE MORE FREEDOM TO PROPOSE NEW INITIATIVES.

3. I THEN ASKED THE PRIMIN HIS VIEWS OF THE MUCH-DISCUSSED "HISTORIC COMPROMISE" BETWEEN THE PCI AND THE DC AND OF PURPORTED DIVISION BETWEEN FORMER PCI SECRETARY LONGO AND PRESENT PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER ON THIS ISSUE. RUMOR COMMENTED "IF ONLY IT WERE TRUE". HE SAW NO INDICATION OF A REAL DIVISION WITHIN THE COMMUNIST RANKS. ON THE BROADER ISSUE, RUMOR ACKNOWLEDGED THE CURRENT MODERATE PCI ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE GOVERNMENT. HE FELT THERE WAS GOOD REASON BEHIND THIS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE. RECOGNIZING THEIR INABILITY TO CONTROL THE GOVERNMENT AT THIS TIME, THEY ARE PLAYING A CAUTIOUS AND WAITING GAME. RUMOR FELT THAT THE EVENTS IN CHILE AND MORE RECENTLY IN GREECE REINFORCED THE PCI VIEWS TOWARDS THEIR MODERATE LINE. HE FELT BY PUSHING TOO HARD, THEY COULD LOSE ALL AND CONSEQUENTLY ARE LOOKING TOWARDS GREATER PARTICIPATION MUCH FARTHER DOWN THE ROAD OVER THE NEXT TEN TO 15 YEARS. RUMOR EMPHASIZED THE DC'S AWARENESS OF THE PCI STRATEGY AND HOPES THAT THE DC CAN EFFECTIVELY MAKE USE OF THIS PERIOD OF MODERATE PCI OPPOSITION TO MAKE MUCH-NEEDED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REFORMS.

4. I THEN ASKED RUMOR'S VIEWS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT PERIOD OF RELATIVE LABOR PEACE. HE SAID IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THIS PEACE WILL CONTINUE INDEFINITELY BUT HE IS OPTIMISTIC THAT AT LEAST IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, ITALIAN LABOR LEADERS WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT AND TO MODERATE THEIR DEMANDS. HE FELT THERE WOULD BE MINOR OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH THE ENERGY SHORTAGE, ESPECIALLY THE BAN ON SUNDAY DRIVING. NOTWITHSTANDING THESE POINTS, RUMOR FELT THAT THE UNIONS WERE PREPARED TO MODERATE THEIR ECONOMIC DEMANDS.

TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD NOT ONLY HURT ITALY AT THIS
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CRUCIAL STAGE BUT ALSO INJURE THE UNIONS POLITICALLY. IN HIS MEETINGS WITH THE LABOR UNIONS, RUMOR INDICATED THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO CURTAIL THE DRAMATIC NUMBER OF MANHOURS LOST DUE TO STRIKES AND ABSENTEEISM FOR ITALY TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN THE CURRENT WORLD MARKET.

5. WE TALKED ABOUT THE ITALIAN MEASURES TO DEAL WITH

ENERGY CRISIS. I SHOWED THE PRIMIN THE EMBASSY'S INSTRUCTION TO ALL US GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL IN ITALY TO ADHERE TO THE ITALIAN REGULATIONS ON THE SUNDAY DRIVING BAN. RUMOR ENTHUSIASTICALLY APPLAUDED OUR VOLUNTARY ACTION AND FELT THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD EXAMPLE TO OTHER EMBASSIES.

6. WE THEN BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE DUNN-VANONI SITUATION. THE PRIMIN INDICATED THAT THIS MATTER HAS RECEIVED HIS PERSONAL ATTENTION AND THAT HE HAD SIGNED OFF ON A SOLUTION THAT SHOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO US AND WE WOULD BE INFORMED OFFICIALLY WITHIN THE WEEK.

7. WE ALSO BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE RECENT LOCAL ELECTIONS. RUMOR GENERALLY SEEMED PLEASED OVER THE SUCCESS OF THE CENTER-LEFT COALITION. THE DC ITSELF HELD ITS OWN. HE WAS ESPECIALLY PLEASED THAT THE NEO-FASCIST MSI WAS WEAKENED AND THAT THE PCI LOST SOME GROUND. COMMENTING UPON THE PLI LOSSES, THE PRIMIN AGREED THAT THE PLI LOSSES FORBODE THIS PARTY'S DEMISE.

8. THIS MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL MEETING CONCLUDED WITH THE PRIMIN ACCEPTING MY INVITATION TO MEET AGAIN AT MY VILLA IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE. VOLPE

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